DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 390 304 FL 023 507

AUTHOR Ryan, Carla
TITLE Debate Is Perfect for Integrated Skills.
PUB DATE 95
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (29th, Long Beach, CA, March 26-April 1, 1995).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Class Activities; Classroom Techniques; Course Descriptions; *Debate; *English (Second Language); Higher Education; Language Skills; Language Styles; *Persuasive Discourse; Second Language Instruction; Skill Development
IDENTIFIERS *Integrated Skill Development

ABSTRACT

The use of debate as a technique for teaching integrated skills in English as a Second Language (ESL) is discussed and recommended. The paper argues that debate meets real-world communication needs and reflects a particular practical style of language use (persuasion), meeting expectations of the native speaker. Use of the approach in an intermediate-level two-year college ESL course is then presented in the form of a unit outline, including: directions given to students on the first day of class (assignments and teacher expectations, requirements, grading); a guide for planning a position paper; a sample position paper to be used as a worksheet; a sequence of events for a classroom debate; a debate evaluation form; brief descriptions of video prompts and positions to be used in each of 8 weeks; a list of other possible videos and topics for debate; guidelines for teacher selection of videos and topics, classroom presentation, and management of classroom interaction and assignments; and a sampling of student comments on the approach. (MSE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 390 304

DEBATE IS PERFECT FOR INTEGRATED SKILLS

EVENT # 4553

TESOL 1995

LONG BEACH CALIFORNIA

PRESENTER: CARLA RYAN

General Studies Department
Hocking College
Nelsonville, OH 45764

FL023507

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Carla Ryan

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CONTENTS

Page One
1. Presenter Information
2. Background of Using Debate for Integrated Skills
3. Rationale of Using Debate for Integrated Skills

Page Two
Directions Given on First Day of Class

Page Three
Position Paper (Form) (This is a guide used by students during the course.)

Page Four
Sample (Actual) Position Paper

Page Five
Sequence of Events for the Debate

Page Six
Evaluation of Debate (Form)

Page Seven and Eight
Video Prompts and Positions
(Other possible videos and positions.)

Page Nine
Cautions

Page Ten
Student Comments

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE AT HOCKING COLLEGE:
Claudette Stevens: Director, General Studies Department
Dorie Gilkey: Media Specialist
Chris Weibel: Studio Supervisor

AND TO
Dr. Neil Anderson: The best model of professional and academic excellence.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Carla Ryan is a Coordinator of the English Support Program (an ESOL program) at Hocking College in Nelsonville, Ohio. Hocking is a two year technical college and grants associate degrees. Her job involves program development, curriculum design, scheduling, assessment and placement of incoming and continuing students, institutional outcomes assessment, teaching, textbook selection, and student advising.

BACKGROUND: USING DEBATE FOR INTEGRATED SKILLS

Winter quarter of 1993 I had to co-teach an intermediate level Integrated Skills class for two hours each week, from 8:00-10:00 a.m. I decided to create my own mini-course. I knew it couldn't be something that would require many hours of preparation as I had little time or energy to spare. I decided to do something that would allow practice of real rather than forced discrete language situations such as those I have seen and experienced. I also wanted to incorporate videos because they could provide a fun and energizing solution to maintain not only student interest but mine as well. In addition, it had potential to be a valuable integration of the skill areas if I included writing and discussion. Using a debate format flowed naturally from this.

The first step was a brainstorm session with the college's media specialist on various issues, topics, and possible video prompts. During the course of the quarter some ideas were eliminated or changed because of video content (inappropriate for class purpose or language levels and topic unfamiliarity of students in the class). From this I have refined the course. It continues to amaze me that it works so well.

RATIONALE OF USING DEBATE FOR INTEGRATED SKILLS

Why debate? The primary institutional objective for students is that they are able to meet demands of the real world. The "real world" facing students learning English is an academic level of English in coursework following the ESOL program or course. Students must be able to meet the English demands placed on them in their academic or technical classes with success.

One or two quarters of structural, lexical, written, oral/aural "success" in a language cannot give someone mastery. Obviously that requires significant time in a language. But, adopting the communication style that is in a language will facilitate language use, even if use of the language is not perfect.

In the USA, student success at a post-secondary institution is dependent, somewhat, on mastering the academic communication style. It is DIRECT from one point A•<---------->•B to another.
This is the usual EXPECTED communication stylefor an audience. (An audience on an academic level in the USA for a language learner could be anyone who listens to presentation of certain material in spoken or written form. This could be a profesor, dean, or other.)

The basic expectations held by most audiences are:

==presentation and definition of the position (We all have a position!)
==support with relevant details
== justification of the position
==presentation in a logical, coherent way

These aspects of our communication are part of what we use on a daily basis. We present information and then have to support what we say and where we stand. Debate does this for language learners, in a crafted way. It creates a need to present, justify and defend a position (even if it is "for the classroom"). It is engaging to learners. Those who are engaged in their learning are active learners. I have used this technique since 1993 and consistently had positive results with students.

DIRECTIONS GIVEN ON FIRST DAY OF CLASS

(This information is part of the course syllabus.)

ES 084 INTEGRATED SKILLS - INTERMEDIATE I

During this quarter, you will be viewing media weekly. Also, you will be responding to that media in writing and by discussion in class. The following are general guidelines.

1. You will see the assigned video and write your pre-debate position paper. You have one week.

2. Pre-debate position papers are an outline of what you will explain and defend in your debate. Answer the questions on your handout to develop your position.

3. Turn in your position papers the day before the debate. Papers must be received by noon. Late papers are not accepted as you must be prepared before the debate.

4. Immediately before the debate, you will meet with others in your position group to solidify your information and correct your papers. Then you will debate by explaining and defending your position of Antagonist or Protagonist. All are required to participate.

5. The final 15 minutes of class will be for the next position and new assignment.

6. Post-debate compositons should utilize the notes from the position paper. However, it is a composition and should therefore have the following:
   - A. *Introduction:* 1 paragraph
     Thesis--Statement, definition, and explanation
   - B. *Body:* 2-3 paragraphs
     Support--What reasons and justification do you have for your position? This should be strongly stated and clearly justified.
   - C. *Conclusion:* 1 paragraph
     This should summarize and strongly restate your position.

7. Grades each week are determined as follows:
   - 0-10 points Pre-Debate Position Paper & Post-Debate Composition
   - 0-10 points Participation in Discussion

Name_____ Class_____
Date_____

POSITION PAPER

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS TO CLEARLY DEFINE YOUR POSITION.

TITLE: This is the title of the video.

WHAT: This is the complete description of the position given to you after you select positions of Antagonist or Protagonist.

WHO? Who are you? (In the video you may be a person, political or social system, or other entity.) 1 sentence.

WHEN? When (era) does the action occur? When could it occur? 1 sentence.

WHERE? Where does the action occur? Where could it occur? 2-3 sentences. Could this topic occur in your country?

HOW? How did the story/action progress? Is it a mystery, drama, true-life adventure, relationship triangle, biography, documentary? 3-5 sentences.

WHY? Why does the Antagonist/Protagonist think the way she/he does? Why are her/his position and actions justified? Support your position strongly in this section. (Personally, you may not support this position, but you must do so even if it seems false to you.) 5-10 sentences.

Name_____ Class_____
Date_____

SAMPLE POSITION PAPER

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS TO CLEARLY DEFINE YOUR POSITION.

TITLE: ***GROWING UP IN SMOKE***

WHAT: **ANTAGONIST:** Companies which produce products that are addicting and harmful should have their advertising restricted or, as in the case of the tobacco industry, stopped altogether.

WHO?

WHEN?

WHERE?

HOW?

WHY?

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS FOR THE DEBATE

The times are approximate, depending on the topic and understanding of students. This takes two hours.

1. 8:00-8:25
Clarify any questions about the words, story content, or events from the media. Join others from position group. Check corrected position papers and clarify/solidify position of group. Decide what to present in debate.

2. 8:30-8:40
Moderator gives welcome and restates each side of the issue again. Both sides state their positions, each member contributing to the explanation.

3. 8:40-9:30
Floor is open for questions, answers, explanations, justifications, & debate!

While they are debating, if a word is being misused or mispronounced, I would write it on the chalkboard rather than stop them to explain. They could all see and make use of the correction without teacher interruptions. Also, if a word, expression, or phrase would be helpful for a clear debate, that would also go onto the board.

To finish, both sides would again restate their postitions, sometimes with modifications, sometimes even more firm in their statements.

Each student would use information from the debate, fellow group members, and the debate itself as sources from which to develop the post-debate compositon. The composition was due two days later.

4. 9:30-9:45
Introduction of the new topic, positions, and video. Any extra information they would need to have better success in understanding the video was given at this point.

EVALUATION OF DEBATE

Consistent Participation	1	2	3	4	5
On Topic	1	2	3	4	5
Argumentation Solid	1	2	3	4	5
Asking/Responding to Questions	1	2	3	4	5
Opening/Closing Remarks	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Debate _____/25=_____/10

Position Paper and Composition _____/10

TOTAL _____ / 20 = _____%

VIDEO PROMPTS AND POSITIONS

WEEK ONE:

Growing Up In Smoke (15 minutes)

Topic: Manipulative Advertising

Antagonist: Companies which produce products that are addicting and harmful to people should have their advertising restricted or, as in the case of the tobacco industry, stopped altogether.

Protagonist: Companies which produce products that are legal should be allowed to advertise at will. Tobacco companies manufacture legal products which are in high demand. Tobacco companies pay for their advertising the same as any other company. If people don't want to buy these products, they don't have to.

WEEK TWO:

One Too Many (30 minutes)

Topic: Underage Drinking

Antagonist: There should not be a legal minimum drinking age. If there has to be one, the consequences of violating an underage drinking law should not be severe. Drinking and driving are not issues that are as big as other social problems.

Protagonist: There should be a legal minimum drinking age. The consequences for violating the drinking age should be relatively severe. Drinking and driving are not okay, they are big problems.

WEEK THREE:

Forever Young (Dr. C. Everet Koop) (60 minutes)

Topic: Health Care for Older Citizens

Antagonist: Older people have contributed greatly to society. But, at age_____, they should begin to decrease (or stop) direct involvement in society and make way for younger people. The older people need to rest and take it easy. They've worked hard, now it's time for them to retire.

Protagonist: Older people are the best natural resource in a country. They should keep actively involved in all areas of society, politics, economics, etc.

WEEK FOUR:

Mr. Mom (90 minutes)

Topic: Reversal of Traditional Roles

Antagonist: Reversal of traditional roles is unacceptable and should be discouraged.

Protagonist: Reversal of traditional roles is acceptable and should be encouraged.

WEEK FIVE:

Closer From Home (40 minutes)

Topic: Homelessness

Antagonist: Society already helps the homeless enough. They also need to help themselves and not just get handouts.

Protagonist: Society needs to continue to help the homeless and in ways that are adequate to provide their needs.

WEEK SIX:

The Long Walk Home (90 minutes)

Antagonist: Peaceful demonstration against wrongful systems is a coward's way to change those systems. Nonviolent marches and boycotts are not successful because people need their rights and freedoms now. They need bread today or they'll never live to dream of a better day tomorrow. If they don't have this today, what good is tomorrow? When people get angry, they bring about a change. Independence comes when people get angry and shake things up.

Protagonist: Peaceful demonstration against wrongful systems is the best way to change those systems. Nonviolent marches and boycotts are successful in the long run because using violence to stop violence never works, too many people get hurt. Violence breeds violence.

WEEK SEVEN:

The Man Who Planted Trees (30 minutes)

Topic: Social Responsibility

Antagonist: I have a committment to my family and I care for them. I also complete my (minimal) obligations to society and the government by paying taxes, obeying the laws, being courteous, etc. So, I have a right to a clean and safe community. I have a right to expect certain services when I want them. Since I have only today in which to live, I live for today.

Protagonist: As humans, we are invisibly bound together in a common world. What I do today may forever change my tomorrow. Therefore, even if I don't "possess" something doesn't mean I shouldn't care for it and work to protect it. I must walk softly and reverently on this earth.

WEEK EIGHT

Tootsie (116 minutes)

Topic: Lying

Antagonist: Lying to get what you want is unacceptable. Problems you may have are direct results of doing something wrong. Achievement of a goal is not valueable if you must lie to get it. Society, politics, and families need truth, not more lies.

Protagonist: Lying to get what you want is acceptable. Any problems you may have a result of the lies are minor compared to the achievement of your goal.

A sample of other possible videos and topics for debate:

VIDEOS	TOPICS
The Burning Bed	Domestic Violence: Is Self-Defense Justified?
The Doctor	Reasonable Access to Medical Care (Or, Rights of Patients)
To Kill A Mockingbird	Race/Ethnic Issues
Guess Who's Coming To Dinner	
Nine To Five	The Glass Ceiling
The Milagro Beanfield War	Community/Togetherness
Romero	Right of Military Intervention In Other Countries
When The Legends Die	Living Between Two Cultures
How To Succeed In Business	Definitions and Methods of "Being Successful"
How To Marry a Millionaire	
The Manchurian Candidate	Rights of Opponents In War and Peacetime
The Gods Must Be Crazy	"Civilization" For All Peoples
Gandhi	Civil (Passive) Resistance
Revolution	Conscientious Objectors vs Enlistment or The Draft
The Lorax	Using or Abusing The Earth

Some cautions that result from personal experience:

1. The first video should be short, easy to understand, and factual in the content. Even more advanced learners need a warm-up. This should also be done in class so you can walk the students through the process step-by-step.

2. Use varieties of video prompts. There are so many out there that are quality. You can use news clips, Hollywood style movies, 30 minute sitcoms (such as Bill Cosby) with some redeeming value, documentaries, animated movies, specials, and others.

3. Avoid narrated videos or documentaries. The speaker is usually off screen and the content can be quite distant from the projected information at any given time.

4. Skill levels benefiting most from this type of activity would be (high) Beginning II, Intermediate I and II, and Advanced. This could be used with secondary and post-secondary courses.

5. Clarify precisely the Antagonist/Protagonist positions. I found that the quality of the learner papers and debate became better as my ability to clarify increased.

6. Make all position papers due the day before the debate. This ensures prepared learners and greater success in the debate.

7. Video content may become the debate (this is fine because it, too, is real language) but encourage the debate to remain on topic.

8. Make a firm committment to let the learners control what is said during the debate without "guidance" from the instructor. Usually, the only time the instructor should interfere is when something punitive or threatening is happening towards someone who is debating. I have had to intervene when one student has dominated the debate obsessively but most groups develop their own procedure.

STUDENT COMMENTS

Ruth R. *(Honduras) {Began 8-15-93 with no English.}*
I liked the debate because it gave me opportunity to talk without fear to say something wrong and if that was wrong made us to laugh. (And also ask other people's opinion.) The writing part of the debate where useful the get more develop the coordination of the correct use of English. The debate was a way to exercise the vocabulary words I had, and also learn more new word from my classmates. Or that motivated me to look for different way to say something. It was easier when I liked the topic that I had to write or speak about. I liked to go to see the movies even that I did not understand every thing but because I had to do that for an assignment I pay more attention. This is a audiovisual help to get to know the pronunciation and the actual way to say something. That could be better if the movie really showed more specific facts related to the topic of the debate. Something that frustrated me is to have to defend a position that I really didn't believe in. There were not too many things to say. The ideas do not come easily mostly if I was not familiar with that topic. Example: the different medical cares (public and private) because this kind of problems are not the same in my country. The debate took many homework hours trying to write the composition. That might be the price a student has to pay to learn English.

Julio C. (Guatemala) {Came 8-15-93 with high beginning level.}
I think that "Debates" are an excellent idea, because personally I did learn a lot related with facing people around my environment or from a different culture to argue or discuss even a social problem or any specific topic that comes through. However, the most important thing is that this helped me to know how to do it in real life. Another thing that I really liked was that it also helped me to improve more my English fluency. Last, but not least and very important thing is that it also helped me to have a specific and strong criteria of how I think or to defend the things I believe are right, by keeping my position straight any time, anywhere and always, not just in class, but in real life; that is the most important. By having a basis to show or relay what I am saying or trying to prove.

Noel Ureña (Costa Rica) {Came 8-15-94 with high beginning level.}
When I was taking Intermediate I, part of the classes were in debate format. I was fearful of it, because at that time I didn't know how helpful it could be for me. I needed something that was really helpful for me to sharpen my English. Little by little, the debates started to help me a lot. I got over my fear about speaking English in front of others. I improved my speed in organizing ideas and constructing better phrases in Enlish. After, I could feel my English flowing much better than before. My opinion is, debates help to brush-up English and improve communication.